

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7162

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMCONGEN JERUSALEM

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 3858

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, XF, IS, EG, US

SUBJECT: ISRAELI VIEWS ON PROSPECTS FOR INTERIM GOE/GOI AGREEMENT

1. SUMMARY: ISRAELIS REMAIN DISTINCTLY UNCERTAIN ABOUT PROSPECTS FOR INTERIM GOE/GOI AGREEMENT. CABINET SO FAR HAS MAINTAINED UNUSUAL SECRECY RE JUNE 17 RABIN DE-BRIEFING ON WASHINGTON VISIT. IT IS WIDELY ASSUMED, HOWEVER, THAT USG DID NOT PROVIDE RABIN WITH DETAILS OF LATEST GOE POSITION, AND THAT FOCUS OF TRIP WAS DISCUSSION OF NEW ISRAELI PROPOSALS. ONE USUALLY WELL-INFORMED JOURNALIST CLAIMS

THAT RABIN HAS OFFERED TO GIVE GOE TERRITORIAL LINK WITH ABU RODEIS BY PUTTING ACCESS ROAD UNDER UN CONTROL, BUT INSISTED THAT ISRAEL COULD NOT GIVE UP EASTERN END OF PASSES. ISRAELIS BELIEVE THAT AT THIS STAGE BALL IS BACK IN SADAT'S COURT. END SUMMARY.
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2. ISRAELI POLITICIANS AND COMMENTATORS ARE VERY CAUTIOUS ON PROSPECTS OF RENEWED U.S. INITIATIVE FOR INTERIM GOE/GOI AGREEMENT. SOME COMMENTATORS EMPHASIZE PERSISTENCE OF WIDE GAP IN

RESPECTIVE POSITIONS, INsofar AS THESE ARE KNOWN, AND REMAIN SKEPTICAL OF SADAT'S READINESS TO GIVE NECESSARY CONCESSIONS IN EXCHANGE FOR ISRAELI WITHDRAWALS. OTHER OBSERVERS, HOWEVER, BELIEVE THAT NEW NEGOTIATING DYNAMICS HAVE BEEN SET IN MOTION AND THAT AGREEMENT WILL BE REACHED THIS SUMMER, WITH ONE CORRESPONDENT (SEGEV,MAARIV) GOING SO FAR AS TO CLAIM THAT US AND ISRAEL HAVE ALREADY REACHED SECRET AGREEMENT ON TERMS (PM'S OFFICE HAS ISSUED FIRM DENIAL).

3. ISRAELIS REGARD MAIN RESULT OF RABIN'S WASHINGTON VISIT AS IMPROVEMENT IN ATMOSPHERE OF BILATERAL RELATIONS. WITHOUT KNOWING DETAILS, THEY BELIEVE THAT RABIN HAS SUBMITTED NEW ISRAELI PROPOSALS BUT WAS NOT GIVEN CLEAR READING OF CURRENT GOE POSITION. CABINET'S JUNE 17 DECISION REAFFIRMING GOI'S READINESS TO REVIEW ITS POSITION CONSONANT WITH CHANGES WHICH MAY OCCUR IN EGYPTIAN POSITION IS WIDELY INTERPRETED AS MEANING THAT NEXT STEP IS UP TO THE EGYPTIANS. ISRAELI PRESS HAS HIGHLIGHTED AMBASSADOR EILTS RECALL TO WASHINGTON AND ANTICIPATION THAT SECRETARY WILL BE DECIDING ON POSSIBILITY OF NEW SHUTTLE ONLY AT BEGINNING OF NEXT MONTH.

4. WHILE CABINET HAS MAINTAINED UNUSUAL SECRECY ABOUT ITS DELIBERATIONS, GENERAL SPECULATION IS THAT LATEST GOI REQUIREMENTS FOR INTERIM AGREEMENT ARE THE FOLLOWING: MINIMUM 3-4 YEAR DURATION, RETENTION OF EASTERN END OF PASSES, CERTAIN GOE POLITICAL GESTURES, AND NO EXPLICIT LINKAGE WITH SYRIAN/ISRAELI NEGOTIATIONS. ACCORDING TO MAARIV POLITICAL COMMENTER HARIF, JUNE 18, RABIN EXPRESSED READINESS TO PROVIDE EGYPT TERRITORIAL LINK WITH ABU RODEIS BY TRANSFERRING CONTROL OF ACCESS ROAD TO UN. HE IS REPORTEDLY ADAMANT, HOWEVER, THAT ISRAEL CANNOT RELINQUISH CONTROL OVER EASTERN END OF PASSES, AND MUST MAINTAIN BOTH ELECTRONIC SURVEILLANCE CAPABILITY AND THINNED OUT TROOP PRESENCE THERE.
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5. COMMENTATORS EMPHASIZE CABINET CONCERN THAT ISRAEL MAKE CONVINCING CASE TO USG OF ITS READINESS FOR MEANINGFUL CONCESSIONS, CONTINGENT ON EGYPTIAN RECIPROCITY, TO PREVENT DIPLOMATIC DEADLOCK AND MAINTAIN MOMENTUM OF IMPROVEMENT IN US-ISRAEL RELATIONS. LABOR PARTY MODERATES/DOVES, HOWEVER, ARE CONCERNED ABOUT POSSIBILITY OF REPLAY OF MARCH CRISIS. THEY FEAR THAT RABIN, TO AVOID CABINET CRISIS, (I.E. SHOWDOWN WITH PERES) WILL AGAIN HOLD TO "HARD" GOI NEGOTIATING POSITION. THEY CLAIM THAT THIS TIME, PROVIDED EGYPT COMES UP WITH NEW CONCESSIONS, THEY WILL BE PREPARED TO MAKE CONCERTED EFFORT TO FORCE RABIN TO MOVE AHEAD.
VELIOTES

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